

2.11 Meeting Room Policy

The Chelmsford Public Library makes community meeting and study spaces available for public use on an equitable basis within the requirements described in this policy. These rooms are provided to further the mission of the Chelmsford Public Library as adopted by the Library Board of Trustees; priority use will be granted to Chelmsford Public Library sponsored events. All activity in the meeting and study rooms shall comply with established Library policies.

The Library recognizes and respects the rights of free speech and assembly and will implement this policy in a consistent and viewpoint-neutral manner. Permission to use the Library's meeting and study rooms does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of the user's philosophy, viewpoint, or objectives.

Reservation Request Requirements for Meeting Rooms

1. Non-profit and not-for-profit organizations, Town of Chelmsford departments, and Town of Chelmsford boards/committees may request the use of a Library meeting room once per month. Organizations may be asked to demonstrate their tax-exempt status if not readily available through official sources.
2. Requests for reservations should be made using the Library's online reservation application (or other method determined by the Library Director or Board of Trustees) or via phone. Reservations may be requested up to 90 days in advance and no more than once per month. Reservation requests will be considered in order of request.
3. Meeting room reservations may be requested online up to 72 hours prior to the event. If you need to schedule a room with 72 hours' notice or less, please contact the library administration office directly by phone.
4. One person, who is at least 18 years of age, must assume responsibility for any meeting, providing a name, email address, mailing address, and telephone number, as well as the full name of the organization, purpose/description of the meeting, date/time desired, and the number of persons expected. The identity of the group reserving a room will be public information, and the name of the organization may be listed on the Library event or room bookings calendar.
5. Groups that meet other requirements may request the use of a meeting room for majority child or teenage events provided one or more adults make the request and supervise them during the meeting. Children and teenagers (under age 18) must be supervised at all times by an adult at a ratio of 10:1.
6. All meetings are open to the public. No admission fee may be charged, no business or donations may be solicited directly or indirectly, no animals are permitted other than service animals, no compensation may be given to attendees, and no merchandise, food, or beverages may be sold by any group without permission in advance from the Board of Trustees or the Library Director. A written request for such permission must be submitted to the Board of Trustees before the second Wednesday of the month.

Refusal of Reservation Requests

To the extent permitted by law, the Library may deny an application for meeting room use if:

1. the request for meeting room use made by the person/group/organization contains a material falsehood or misrepresentation, including the official name of the group, contact information, or attempts to bypass request limits through inaccurate information.
2. the person/group/organization requesting use of a meeting room has damaged Library property on prior occasions and not paid for the damage.
3. the person/group/organization requesting use of a meeting room has violated the terms of a prior reservation for use of the Library.
4. the proposed use is prohibited by law.

Any requesting group denied a reservation to use a Library meeting room may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees within 10 days, stating in writing the reasons why the denial of the use is erroneous. A decision will be rendered within 30 days following receipt of the written appeal.

User Responsibilities

Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in cancellation of the reservation or ending the room use when violation is noted. If feasible, staff will first ask the person responsible for the use of the room to correct the violation before cancellation or ending room use.

1. If a meeting is cancelled by the organization, the Administrative Offices must be notified as soon as possible. A 24-hour notice is preferable. If a group cancels more than two times in a six-month period without notifying the library, the group may lose the privilege to reserve a library meeting room.
2. Light refreshments, such as cookies and coffee, are permitted in the McCarthy Meeting room. Light refreshments and covered drinks are permitted in the Conference room. Smoking and alcohol are not permitted anywhere in the Library.
3. Users are responsible for publicity, pre-registration, etc. Publicity and communications about the event distributed by the organization must include the following information:
 1. Name of and contact for the organization prominently displayed as the sponsor and contact of the meeting/event.
 2. The name and address of the Library must only appear on publicity labeled as the location.
 3. The Library logo and branding may not be used on non-Library organizations' publicity.
4. The Library should not be used as a mailing address for any group or organization.

5. Nothing should be attached to walls. Do not use tape, labels, thumbtacks, or adhesives for signage on any of the walls in the meeting rooms. Do not remove any Library posted or approved items (e.g., art on exhibit).
6. The user is responsible for tidying all areas used, and is expected to leave the facility in the same condition as found.
7. Activities inside the meeting rooms must not interfere with regular Library service due to noise (including music or voices that can be heard outside of the rooms), vigorous activity resulting in pounding on walls or floors, excessive opening and closing of meeting room doors, “overflow” gathering in the lobby, or otherwise interfering directly with others’ library use.
8. The user is responsible at all times for the observance of fire and safety requirements including but not limited to maintaining all aisles, doorways, and exits free and clear of all obstructions to permit unimpeded emergency access. Users must comply with staff instruction regarding fire and safety requirements.

Library Stipulations

The Library reserves the right to:

1. cancel any meeting due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Cancellations are posted on our web site (<https://chelmsfordlibrary.org>).
2. reclaim the use of the meeting room for library programming with advance notice to the user whenever possible.
3. relocate a user to the room most suited for its size and function.
4. impose reasonable and actual administrative costs on the user including but not limited to necessary security, clean-up, and traffic management costs so that same are not borne by the Library and taxpayers.
5. hold the user exclusively responsible (financially and otherwise) for any damage to Library property resulting from an event/approved use.

All meeting room reservation approvals are temporary, revocable, and conditional on details in this policy. The Chelmsford Public Library Board of Trustees and/or Library Director reserve the authority to revoke reservation approvals without penalty or liability in its sole discretion for any lawful reason, and to impose time, place, and manner conditions upon the meeting room use. The Library Board of Trustees has final authority concerning availability of meeting room use to the public at large.

The Chelmsford Public Library and Town of Chelmsford assume no responsibility for the safety of any private property brought onto the premises, nor for injury to or death of any persons attending the event/approved use.

Library Study Rooms

The Library offers three small quiet study rooms (1-2 people), one medium-sized study room (3-4 people), and our Local History Room which can be booked as a small meeting room (3-5 people) or for historical research.

Reservation Request Requirements for Study Rooms

1. Requests for reservations should be made using the Library's online reservation application, by contacting or visiting the Reference Desk (or other method determined by the Library Director or Board of Trustees).
1. These rooms can be reserved up to 30 days in advance, for up to two hours at a time (in blocks of 15 minutes). There must be, at minimum, a 2-hour gap between advance reservations made by the same group or individual.
2. **The reservation of a study room left vacant for more than 15 minutes will be cancelled and the room made available for other patrons to reserve.**

Refusal of Reservation/Use Requests

1. All applicable reasons for refusal of requests listed for other Library meeting rooms will be in force for study rooms.

Responsibilities

1. **Users will check in at the Reference Desk before entering the study rooms.**
2. All applicable responsibilities listed for other Library meeting rooms must be followed for study rooms.

Library Stipulations

1. All applicable stipulations listed for other Library meeting rooms will be in force for study rooms.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, March 2023